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Among the rampant tales of secret Communist infiltration of U.S. coinage which have circulated for decades is the mistaken belief that the Mercury Dime showed support for Fascism. It is true that Adolph Weinman's design for the Mercury Dime incorporates the ancient Roman symbol for authority: the Fasces. A Fasces was an axe made a large bundle of wood sticks lashed together. It is a scientific fact that such an axe handle is much stronger than one made of a single piece of wood – and the symbolism of great strength

created by uniting smaller, weaker elements has endured for centuries. Looked at in this proper context, the choice of this symbol for a coin of the “united states” was a brilliant and visually poetic choice.



dime2

Critics who point out a supposedly evil intention behind the Mercury Dime design simply have their history wrong. You see, Weinman designed the Mercury Dime in 1916, at least three years BEFORE the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini adopted this symbol for his cruel regime – and by doing so giving ‘fascism’ a new and hated definition. As an artist, Adolph Weinman was looking back in time to the ancient Romans for his inspiration – he was obviously not looking forward to a totalitarian regime that did not yet exist at the time the design was created. While the historic context of the design cannot be questioned, the rumors of a subliminal, intentional connection still continue to this day.

About Steve Wolff - Steve Wolff has been involved with collectibles and coins for over 30 years. During that time, Steve has served as a fine art gallery director, president of a nationwide collectible coin company, director of coin product development, liaison with world mints, and his present role as Creative Director for GovMint.com and its affiliated companies.